

OLD HAMPTON COURT

Bill Nye and Clarence Visit the Palace.

AN ADVENTURE ON THE WAY

With a Government Deer—History of the Palace From the Time It Was Built.

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LONDON, Dec. 23, 1893.

Saturday I had promised to take Clarence down to Hampton Court with the understanding that I was to pay the bills and Clarence to tell me what train to go upon and when to get off. We traveled third class in order to conceal the fact that I was an American. Also to order that we might smoke our black and malignant pipes. There are several ways by which one may go to Hampton Court and a good many more by which one cannot go there. Some go by coach, as I did some time ago and to which reference was then made.

Hampton Court is not a new subject upon which to write, but it is a very interesting place indeed. It is open free every day except Friday, and so far I have not missed anything that was free, from salvation down.

Hitting from the station up to Hampton in a hired drag, Clarence raked up an old regarding the herms of England and the neglect of the letter h.



ON THE DEER.

at the same time calling to mind the sage remark of the old horse doctor who defended hunting. He said: "Hit his not the 'unting that 'urts the 'orse. Hite the 'ammer, 'ammer, 'ammer on the 'ard 'ighway."

The approach through the park along a beautiful drive of over a mile between double rows of enormous horse chestnut trees is most beautiful, while under these trees the hundreds of tame deer, in droves like sheep, eat the falling nuts without fear. Even my load, en-pieces, checked clothes did not frighten them away.

My! how beautiful they are and how I would have liked to pop one over with my faithful little revolver, voted to me years ago for being the most popular man in the sliding, Wy!

These deer are protected by the government, however, though the stag I tried to feed with a hot cross bun really does not need the protection of the government. Dear reader, did you ever suddenly find an armful of horns belonging to a gentleman deer in the pit of your stomach? I have. Of course it was only play and all the bright-eyed children and nurses laughed ha, ha, but I wore out a Martin umbrella on the hunt and 'aven't used that scarlet necktie since. Red has been quite a popular color for the scarf this autumn, even among the elderly gentry, and I wore one that actually interrupted conversation.

The palace of Hampton Court was built by Cardinal Wolsey in 1515, though it has been repaired once since that and one can see where the mortar is a shade lighter between the deep red bricks. It is about the plainest building I have ever seen, considering its cost. It has a facade, but no lift. The walls are of old fashioned handmade brick placed one upon another.

Cardinal Wolsey presented the palace to Henry VIII on his birthday, and the king occupied it for some time. Henry VIII added to the palace a new iron mud scraper at the door, as a delicate hint to his retainers not to retain the mud on their mammoth feet when calling on the king. The scraper is still pointed out to visitors, having been brought from Paris in the sixteenth century.

Edward VI was born here, and here died his mother, Jane Seymour. Queen Elizabeth has lived here, also James I, Charles I, Cromwell—who will be remembered as an active partisan in English politics; Charles II, James II, also William and Mary. The last king to reside here was George II. During the reign of William and Mary the most of the palace, with the exception of the summer kitchen and laundries, was torn down and rebuilt from designs by Sir Christopher Wren and is in the Dutch style. The front of the palace is exceedingly plain and reminds one of the old Illinois Central railroad depot in Chicago. Over the entrance court are the arms of Cardinal Wolsey. I do not know where his legs are, though I inquired of the caretaker, an old party in a red calico uniform.

The great hall, over 100 feet long, 40 feet wide and 35 feet high, is a grand affair, but hard to heat in winter. I would think, as present it is heated by Jacob steam coils, but in the days of Henry VIII, when his majesty felt chilly, he took another drink.

The beautiful stained glass window shows the ancestral bearings of the king and his six wives, each of whom was the only woman he ever truly loved.

This room has a lofty ceiling, beautifully decorated and carved by a man who was certainly more gifted as a carver than I am. The walls are hung with old tapestry representing the life of Abraham. It is not for sale.

The presence chamber, doubtless where Christmas presents were made, is also hung with tapestry which should be taken down and wiped with a damp

brush as soon as spring opens up. These tapestries are worked in allegorical designs, showing people with peculiar endowments for which I presume they are not to blame, and sweet little boys boys with piano legs.

Descending to the second court, one will see over the gateway on the west side a clock nearly 400 years old, though the works have been replaced by later ones. The king's staircase is on the southeast side of the clock and just west of the gateway. This stairway leads to the state apartments, the throne room, the guardroom, the king's bed chamber, etc. There are also 29 picture galleries, I believe. A great many of the pictures are portraits and should have been done by Landseer or some other good animal painter. Most of the men look as though they were suffering from hypernutrition, and the savage scowl of royalty shows ever and anon a tyrannical character utterly without compassion.

Of course there are some historical pictures and some Biblical scenes, among them being a graphic chief-dog over representing Joseph excusing himself to Potiphar's wife in order to catch the last boat for States Island.

Another picture, enlarged from a bodak, I judge, represents Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The figure on the right in this group is Eve, as I learned from an attendant. Adam is on the left—one cannot tell by the clothes which is which. One has just peeled a large 30 ounce pippen and has thrown the peeling over her shoulder to see what letter it makes.

Adam seems worried about the serpent, which hangs near him in a tree, and one can see that our ancestor is trying to remember where his serpent antitide is so that he can go and lay his hand right on it if anything should happen.

One cannot but be impressed by this picture of these two single handed parents of the human race. With no experience at all, green and confused as all get out, raw and unlettered, yet called suddenly forward and asked to become the parents of all mankind, white, black, red and yellow!

Think of it! Who could not shudder at the very idea? It is a mighty solemn thing to be a parent even where one's child is of same color as one's self; but, ah, stop and think over for a moment what it must be to have the doctor bring with him a Mongolian baby, or a little red brother, or a fifteenth amendment!

I do not wonder that Adam strokes his whiskers thoughtfully and wishes that as a forefather he might be allowed a vacation. Eve's face is not so easily read, as she has partially turned to see about the apple peeling on the ground. Both Adam and Eve have a fine complexion and considerable of it.

I would say Hampton Court palace is now occupied only by a number of the very poor of the nobility who are unable to pay rent and are by the kindness of the queen quartered here. Left with nothing but their empty titles now, these noble paupers boldly put on their door plates the only possession they have, and ever and anon one sees a bell pull or a knocker under which is engraved in big letters the Earl of Barmy, the Duke of Lower Sandusky or Lady Eleanor Malloy-Tidd.

Here, where for centuries the king and his retinue dwelt in magnificence and these many courts echoed with silvery laughter, where the table of the royal manor could be heard even at night, grooming under its weight of good things to eat, including paste and sweets, porridge, joints, toad-in-the-hole, shandygaff and everything that heart could wish, now at dawn one sees the Duke of Lower Sandusky light up his gasoline stove and with raspberry tea and a smoked herring begin the long, long, weary day. Or he sees Lady Eleanor Malloy-Tidd come down stairs furtive-



THE EARL'S WASH.

ly, chop up an old dry goods box in the salon, carry the shivers up stairs to her massive but bleak apartments and then return for the tin dipper of milk left on the royal stoop by the milkman.

Then at evening when the old palace was all aghast and the swish and rattle of heavily starched petticoats was heard on the king's staircase, what a contrast it was with the present when, in the ghastly and deserted court, we see the Earl of Asenstida sweeping back from the King's Arms with a growler full of his own and a sardine on toast.

I have seen nothing in all my pained career which so impressed me with the transitory nature of all earthly glory as this. Even my valet Clarence was impressed with it and spoke of it in pity.

While we stood at the gate which opens on the pathway leading to the vineyard where the mammoth grape vine grows, laden with a carload of grapes each year for the exclusive use of the queen, the Earl of Pinkham hung his washing out of his window on a tack.

"Too bad," said Clarence, knocking the contents of his pipe out against the head of his boot, for I allow him to be perfectly open and free with me. "Poor chap! Very sad that. I've seen 'im decay even in me own time. Look at the run wash 'e 'as 'anging on the carpet tack against 'is window. It's only a few years since 'e 'ad to 'ave two tacks for 'is washing."

Bill Nye

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